

the voice of the extremist is much stronger in this administration. It is not just policies of killing union jobs—the men and women who build things for America—but if you listen, it is how the new members of this administration talk about these jobs. Listen. You have to listen, and what you hear is a condescending tone as it relates to these jobs. You may have heard John Kerry and Gina McCarthy, the climate change czars in the White House, who were saying in one of their press conferences that we need to help people make “better choices” on their jobs. That is pretty condescending. They are talking about laborers. They are talking about my oil and gas workers in the great State of Alaska or in Colorado.

The Secretary of Energy, in her confirmation hearing, talked about how some of the jobs might have to be “sacrificed.”

Even in the Environment and Public Works Committee—and I am a very bipartisan guy—some of my Senate colleagues on the other side of the aisle were recently talking about: We need to encourage people to get more “relevant jobs.”

What is more relevant than powering America?

Until recently, the men and women who built America—pipelines, oil and gas rigs, roads, bridges, the men and women with dirt under their fingernails—were celebrated, which is as they should be. They built this country. They powered this country. They won wars for this country. By the way, they often fought in wars for this country. Then they came home. They got good jobs in the building trades as laborers, operating engineers, pipefitters, teamsters, IBEWs—the IBEW like my great-grandfather helped start. Not so much anymore.

The new Secretary of Energy is now calling them “fossil workers” who are from “fossil communities.” I am not kidding. Listen to her. I have been trying to give them a little bit of advice: Don’t use that term. It is condescending. You are talking to workers as if they are some kind of dinosaur that should be put in a museum. Communities? Fossil communities? Really?

Madam Secretary, if you are listening, ditch that language. It drips with an attitude of being condescending toward these great Americans.

Well, I was just home in my State with a bunch of these so-called “fossil workers” this past weekend. These are some of the best, most patriotic Americans anywhere. They are tough; they are hard-working; they love their country, but I will tell you they are concerned. They are concerned. Why? Because they know that exactly what I have been talking about here is happening—the radical, extremist environmental groups want to kill and are killing jobs.

By the way, as for that lawsuit I talked about on the Willow Project, 200 Alaskans were sent home during a re-

cession. Men and women who have to pay mortgages and pay tuitions were sent home.

So my workers in the great State of Alaska are concerned. They know that these groups they are sending have a beeline into the White House and that they want to kill jobs—energy jobs—in my State and in America. They are worried that the majority now, the Senate majority, has similar views, so they are nervous.

Yet I am hopeful on one thing. Given his background and his heritage—now I am talking about the Secretary of Labor, Secretary Walsh.

I believe that, when the decisions are made—and I hope when the decisions are being made in the Biden administration to kill more good-paying energy jobs that built this country—and when they are coming before the Biden administration, the new Secretary of Labor is going to stand up for the working men and women, stand up for the laborers in Boston whom he knows so well or the laborers in Alaska whom he knows so well and look at the other Cabinet members and say: Not on my watch. We are not going to kill any more of these jobs.

That is what I am hopeful for. That is what he committed to me to do, and that is why I voted for Secretary Walsh as the new Secretary of Labor.

FILIBUSTER

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I have one more topic I would like to talk about today. It is another important one, and it is one that many have been talking about here on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Many have spoken very eloquently about this topic, and depending on when they have spoken about it—this year, this week, last year, a decade ago, a century ago—it is a topic that is really fundamental to this institution, and it looks as if Members in this institution are trying to change the institution forever. Now, I am talking about the filibuster.

As you know, there has been much talk recently about the possibility of getting rid of the filibuster. This is an action that will fundamentally transform this institution, certainly, but I believe, frankly, it will transform our country. I don’t think this is a wise move at all. The irony is—and I am going to talk about it—until very recently, the vast majority of my colleagues, Republican and Democratic, were in agreement on this topic in that getting rid of the legislative filibuster was not a wise move for the Senate and not a wise move for America.

Now, this might seem like an insular issue—something that people in Washington, DC, get incensed about, wound up about, and the people back home might not necessarily care because it might not impact them—but I don’t think that this is the case at all. This rule, the filibuster, is at the very heart of what keeps extreme legislation, pushed by a small minority of the pub-

lic, from passing. It is a rule that, in the Senate, certainly encourages, if not demands, compromise and bipartisan work both when one’s party is in or out of power.

Now, look, our instincts as Senators—all of our instincts—are to get things done for our States, for our country, but what is good for Alaska isn’t always good for Colorado, and what is good for Colorado isn’t always good for New York. What is good for the majority isn’t always good for the minority and vice versa and isn’t always good for the Nation. That is the heart of federalism. It is also why the majority can’t wield unfettered power in the U.S. Senate. With the exception of a few laws, what is required here is typically 60 votes on legislation. It is what separates this body, the Senate, from the House.

For the good of the country, if you look at our history, we must work together, find compromise, find consensus, find solutions, particularly on major legislation, to get a broad-based buy-in from all Americans or most Americans. This is what the filibuster has required.

Remember, the Framers understood that, here in the Senate, we would be different from the House. We would be the bulwark against what James Madison called an anchor, a necessary fence, against the fickleness and passions that pervade the House. No offense to our Members of the House of Representatives, but as George Washington is said to have told Thomas Jefferson, the Framers created the Senate to cool House legislation. It was the cooling saucer you had with regard to the tea in the cup.

Indeed, the Senate—often referred to as the “world’s greatest deliberative body” in its earliest days—was founded on the right of unlimited debate. That is what the filibuster is. Even in the first session of the Senate in 1789, Senators used this right to debate and debate and debate in order to delay consideration of legislation. It wasn’t until the mid-1800s that this tactic was coined the “filibuster.”

The point is that this procedural rule in the Senate has been here, in one form or another, since the founding of the Republic, and when you hear my colleagues talk about it as some new, recent procedure, it is just not factually accurate. Before the 1900s, there was no formal procedure to even end debate if a Senator chose to talk a bill to death. It wasn’t until 1917, during a debate about arming Merchant Marine vessels during World War I, that the Senate established the cloture tool, giving the body the ability to end debate by a certain margin of Senators.

Now, as some of my colleagues have been debating recently and have mentioned throughout its history, we have seen the filibuster, cloture used for good. We have used it to stop legislation, and it has also been used for ill—to delay much needed, historic reforms like civil rights legislation during the

fifties and sixties, legislation which was filibustered by Democratic Senators until the filibuster was finally broken in the sixties. It has also been used for many other purposes, but Members on both sides have used it for centuries. In fact, one scholar's account was that the very first Senate filibuster was over a bridge across the Potomac River. I am not sure why, but I guess it was an important issue back then.

So slowing things down, cooling passions, that is what this body was designed to do, and that is what this procedure has done for decades. That is why my friends on the other side, who are undertaking a push to get rid of this, need to think. They need to stop. They need to think. The American people need to understand the consequences, and our good friends in the media who are covering the Senate need to write some real history about this.

As my friends on the other side of the aisle know, this is one of these issues that, when the shoe was on the other foot, we did not take action. What am I talking about? Recently, the Republicans held the majority in the Senate, and, recently, with President Trump, we had a Republican in the White House. There was frustration, and they wanted to move things quicker, and the President, President Trump, was pressuring many Senators: Let's get rid of the filibuster. We didn't. We didn't. We told the President: It is not a good idea for the Senate, and it is not a good idea for the country.

That is what we did when the shoe was on the other foot. We said no. It is not good for this body, and it is not good for the country. The Republican President was pushing: We need to get things done. We need to get rid of it. No.

Let me just read a few of the things that were said recently about the necessity of keeping the filibuster.

My friend from Delaware, in 2018, said:

I am committed to never voting to change the legislative filibuster.

Now, he said that when a Republican President was in the White House.

My friend from New Jersey, in 2009, said:

My colleagues and I—everybody I have talked to—believes the legislative filibuster should stay here, and I will personally resist any efforts to get rid of it.

My Democratic friend from Montana said just a little over a year ago:

I am a "no" on changing the filibuster. The move to make the Senate like the House, I think, is a mistake.

I could go on.

I don't want the Senate to become like the House. The consequences of getting rid of the filibuster are too great.

These are all words spoken very recently by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Even more impressive, just a few years ago, we had 61 Senators—33 Republicans, 25 of whom are still here,

and 30 Democrats, 27 of whom are still in the Senate today—who sent a letter. I have it right here.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD this letter sent to the Senate majority leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, and the Democratic leader, Senator SCHUMER, saying we have to maintain the 60-vote threshold for filibusters involving legislation.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES SENATE,
Washington, DC, April 7, 2017.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,
Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL AND DEMOCRATIC LEADER SCHUMER: We are writing to urge you to support our efforts to preserve existing rules, practices, and traditions as they pertain to the right of Members to engage in extended debate on legislation before the United States Senate. Senators have expressed a variety of opinions about the appropriateness of limiting debate when we are considering judicial and executive branch nominations. Regardless of our past disagreements on that issue, we are united in our determination to preserve the ability of Members to engage in extended debate when bills are on the Senate floor.

We are mindful of the unique role the Senate plays in the legislative process, and we are steadfastly committed to ensuring that this great American institution continues to serve as the world's greatest deliberative body. Therefore, we are asking you to join us in opposing any effort to curtail the existing rights and prerogatives of Senators to engage in full, robust, and extended debate as we consider legislation before this body in the future.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Collins, Christopher A. Coons, Orrin Hatch, Joe Manchin III, Claire McCaskill, John McCain, Lisa Murkowski, Patrick J. Leahy, Roger F. Wicker, Lindsey Graham, Luther Strange, Richard Burr, Angus S. King, Jr., Mark R. Warner, Michael F. Bennet, Jerry Moran, Amy Klobuchar, Roy Blunt, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Marco Rubio.

Martin Heinrich, Jeanne Shaheen, John Boozman, Thom Tillis, Sherrod Brown, Dianne Feinstein, Shelly Moore Capito, John Thune, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Bill Cassidy, Bill Schatz, Heidi Heitkamp, Michael B. Enzi, Jeff Flake, Dean Heller, Chuck Grassley, Cory A. Booker, Maria Cantwell, Mazie Hirono, Rob Portman.

Lamar Alexander, Thad Cochran, John Kennedy, Joe Donnelly, Jon Tester, Ben Sasse, Thomas R. Carper, Todd Young, Pat Roberts, Kamala D. Harris, Margaret Wood Hassan, Bill Nelson, Tammy Duckworth, Johnny Isakson, Jack Reed, Edward J. Markey, Mike Lee, Debbie Stabenow, Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert Menendez, Tim Kaine.

United States Senators.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, this was sent in April 2017. Now, what was going on in April 2017? Republicans had the majority, and President Trump was pressuring us to get rid of the filibuster. We said no.

This is what the letter said:

Regardless of our past disagreements on that issue, we are united—

Remember, 61 Senators, 27 Democratic Senators, who are still here, just 3 years ago said this—

we are united in our determination to preserve the ability of Members to engage in extended debate when bills are on the Senate floor.

We are mindful of the unique role the Senate plays in the legislative process, and we are steadfastly committed to ensuring this great American institution—

The U.S. Senate—

continues to serve as the world's greatest deliberative body. Therefore, we are asking you to join us in opposing any effort to curtail the existing rights and prerogatives of Senators to engage in full, robust, and extended debate as we consider legislation before this body in the future.

That is the letter. Twenty-seven of my Democratic friends said "Don't get rid of the filibuster" 3 years ago. Where are they now?

Why is it that when this topic comes up, Senators MANCHIN and SINEMA are the only ones the media focuses on? How come they are not asking the questions of the other 25—one-quarter of the entire body—who wrote this letter? What happened? Where is their conviction?

When the shoe was on the other foot, we said we are not doing it, but they now want to do it. Nobody is asking them. I think the media should take a look at every Senator who signed this letter 3 years ago and say: Hey. Why did you change your opinion so quickly? Three years ago, you were adamantly against the filibuster, getting rid of it. What happened? Could it be that you now have power and you—but we didn't do that when we had the power, when we had the White House.

It is a really important question. Actually, it is so important, I would welcome any of my colleagues who signed the letter, Democrat or Republican, to come on down and explain to your constituents, explain to the American people why you switched so quickly and what you think it is going to do to the structure of the U.S. Senate and literally to our country.

What strikes many of us is how, on so many issues, people change their side—it happens on both sides—when people are holding power from different perspectives.

Let me provide another example that even hits our media friends. In 2004, when George W. Bush was President and Republicans had the majority, they were evidently considering getting rid of the filibuster, and they didn't.

The New York Times wrote the following:

The Republicans see the filibuster as an annoying obstacle, but it is actually one of the checks and balances that the founders, who worried greatly about the concentration of power, built into our system.

It is the New York Times saying the Founders built the filibuster into our system.

People who call themselves conservatives should find a way of achieving their goals without declaring war on one of the oldest traditions in American democracy.

The filibuster. That is the New York Times. So Republicans heeded the advice of the New York Times. It doesn't happen a lot, but it did.

So let's see where the New York Times was on this one just about a month ago.

The filibuster is a centuries-old parliamentary tool that has been transformed into a weapon for strangling functional government. The filibuster must go.

Well, so much for the New York Times's convictions. I wonder why they are changing their tune. I wonder why they are changing their tune. Probably the same reason that some of my Democratic colleagues are changing their tune after signing this letter.

So I will end with one final quote. This is from a politician we all know well, all very familiar with him. It is from a speech on the Senate floor by U.S. Senator—in 2005, U.S. Senator Barack Obama. He spoke about how the American people expect their politicians to work to create a more perfect union.

What they do not expect is for one party, be it Republican or Democrat—

This is former Senator, former President Obama speaking right here on the floor—

to change the rules in the middle of the game so that they can make all the decisions while the other party is told to sit down and keep quiet.

Sounds a little bit like what is going on with this filibuster debate.

I understand that Republicans are getting a lot of pressure to do this—

“This” meaning get rid of the filibuster—

from factions outside the [Senate] Chamber, but we need to rise above the “ends justify

the means” mentality because we are here to answer the people—all of the people, not just the ones who are wearing our particular party label.

That was Senator Obama—former Senator Obama, former President Obama saying in 2005: Don't do it, Republicans. You have the power. You have the Presidency. You have the Senate. Don't get rid of the filibuster.

Well, I couldn't agree more with our former President. Again, when we had the ability to do this just 3 years ago, we said no.

I hope our friends in the media will write about this. Don't hold your breath. But here is one instance when the shoe was on the other foot. Because it was so important to America, so important to this institution, we declined to make the power move.

It would be really good—whether it is President Obama, who has spoken out about this now; or the New York Times, who has changed their tune; or all 25 of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who signed this letter 3 years ago saying “Don't do it”—come on down, speak to the American people. Tell them why you have had such a drastic change of heart.

But I will tell you this: If we do do it, you are going to regret it; we are going to regret it; the American people are going to regret it. And do you know what? In my discussions with some of my Democratic colleagues, and I am not going to name names, they know that. They know that. They are getting a lot of pressure. Majority Leader

SCHUMER is getting a lot of pressure from the far left.

Don't let the far left ruin this institution. Don't let the far left bludgeon you guys into changing America, because I think deep down in your heart of hearts, especially all of you who signed this letter 3 years ago know what the right thing to do for the U.S. Senate is and the right thing to do for the United States of America is, and it is to continue to keep what the Founding Fathers devised for this body.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:47 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 24, 2021, at 10:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 23, 2021:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

SHALANDA D. YOUNG, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

VIVEK HALLEGGERE MURTHY, OF FLORIDA, TO BE MEDICAL DIRECTOR IN THE REGULAR CORPS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE, SUBJECT TO QUALIFICATIONS THEREFOR AS PROVIDED BY LAW AND REGULATIONS, AND TO BE SURGEON GENERAL OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS.